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# Burnout among public primary school teachers in Dire Dawa administrative region, Ethiopia

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The study aimed to assess the level of professional burnout and the effect of demographic variables among primary school teachers in Dire Dawa town. A cross-sectional survey research design on data collected using teacher burnout scale from 211 teachers was conducted. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. It was revealed that primary school teachers in the administration experience high professional burnout and male older teachers with many years of service experience burnout. Educational qualification showed no relationship with the experience of burnout. Teachers' gender is correlated with career satisfaction and coping with job stress while experience is correlated with perceived administrative support and attitude toward students. Moreover, the change in burnout experience of primary school teachers could be explained by socio-demographic variables. Thus, it was recommended that school leaders should introduce urgent interventions to help teachers cope with their job stress and burnout.

## KEYWORDS

burnout, primary school teachers, socio-demographic variables, teacher burnout scale, logistic regression

## Introduction

Teaching is one of the most difficult yet most rewarding career paths a professional can take. Across the country, teachers are helping to shape the way future generations think, question, grow, and learn. Not only do teachers educate, but also they are role models and supporting figures in the lives of their students.

Despite an increasing demand for teachers due to factors such as a growing population and the need for improving educational access, there's a nationwide teacher turnover (MoE, 2021). Tragically, exacerbating that teacher shortage is the fact that teachers have an extremely high rate of burnout—meaning less qualified teachers are held in the profession for long (Iancu et al., 2018; Genoud and Waroux, 2021).

Teachers are the most important assets of the education system. Teachers play a vital role in helping achieve the objectives of the education system in a nation. To this end, teachers should be appropriately motivated and committed to their job (Negash, 2006; Ayalew et al., 2020). However, the Ethiopian education system, be it primary, secondary, or tertiary is severely impacted by lack of teacher morale, voluntary turnover, and lack of

commitment (Sisay et al., 2019). Teachers are usually considered unsatisfied and underperforming in schools. Most attribute the dearth of quality education in the whole education system to a lack of teacher commitment. However, lack of teacher commitment is one symptom of teacher burnout.

WHO (2019) defines burnout as "... a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed." Similarly, Maslach et al. (2012) characterizes it as a condition of weariness of enthusiasm, being distant from one's job, and diminished feelings of individual achievement that can happen among people who do "people work" of some kind. It's marked by experiences of tiredness or depletion of energy, as well as greater mental detachment from one's profession and thoughts of pessimism or contempt about one's profession; and reduced professional efficacy.

Burnout occurs when people who are passionate and committed become disenchanted with a profession or vocation that provided them with much of their identity and purpose earlier in their professional life. It occurs as the things that kindle one's zeal and enthusiasm are slipped away, and mundane or tedious tasks take their place. Teachers experience frustrating experiences that can lead to fatigue, anxiety, and depression. If left unchecked, these symptoms can cause teacher burnout. Researchers cite several factors as reasons for burnout, among them are an increase in student bad behavior, student apathy, overcrowding, increasing administrative loads, lack of infrastructural support, and society's negative opinion of the profession (Cunningham, 1983; McIntyre, 1983; Burke et al., 1996; Watts and Robertson, 2011; Matiangi et al., 2016; Jamaludin and You, 2019; Amir, 2020). On the other hand, Kuimova et al. (2016) indicate low salary as an important cause of teacher burnout. Among the causes identified by different researchers, the most important ones affecting teachers in Ethiopian schools, in particular, are many. Researchers (Amanu, 2013; Demeke, 2014; Wossenie, 2014) identify overcrowding, increase in students' bad behavior, uncertainties related to the economy and COVID-19, the low status accorded to the teaching profession, increasing administrative loads, red tape, and imbalance between work and family life as the most important causes of burnout.

Burnout results in excessive stress, fatigue, insomnia, sadness, anger, or irritability among teachers. With large classes of up to 100 students, teachers feel overworked and exhausted. According to researchers (Maslach et al., 2012; WHO, 2019), the three most important consequences of burnout are exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. The ramifications of burnout are both individual and contextual resulting in many costs to students and each school. Teacher burnout causes increased turnover and absenteeism, reduced job satisfaction, physical/mental health claims, reduction in individual and ultimately school performance (Cunningham, 1983; Klusmann et al., 2008; Schnall et al., 2018; Amir, 2020).

WHO (2019) recognized burnout as an occupational phenomenon as being exhausted, emptied, used up, with nothing left but despair and desperation. Regardless of the type of environment in which teachers work, they experience burnout

(Twillie and Petry, 1990). Teacher burnout can occur gradually, over many years of teaching, or sooner, as during a difficult learning period when teachers begin teaching. Unfortunately, this type of burnout is more common in new teachers, leading to higher levels of attrition.

Burnout is not limited to new teachers. Burnout has serious ramifications not only for the teacher but also for the teacher's school and the students within it and warrants taking immediate action to assuage its consequences. When teachers lose their sense of purpose, feel burdened by fatigue, and withdraw from their work, students will likely feel the effect (Seidman and Zager, 1987). It should come as no surprise, therefore; that research (Arens and Morin, 2016; Herman et al., 2017; Madigan and Kim, 2021; Tikkanen et al., 2021) demonstrates that teacher burnout adversely affects students' achievement and students' behavior. Burnout and teacher attrition go hand in hand. Unexpectedly, when burnt-out teachers stay on, students suffer in terms of bad teaching, less enthusiastic teachers, declining student achievement, and demotivated students (Madigan and Kim, 2021).

A study by Rucinski et al. (2018) found that teachers experiencing burnout have bad interaction and unsupportive classroom environment than other teachers. According to Freudenberger (1977) (cited in Seidman and Zager, 1987), burnout is contagious and classrooms of burnt-out teachers suffer from significant student disruptions.

Moreover, highly motivated teachers exude their energy to their students resulting in motivation and improved student outcomes (Moè et al., 2021). Contrariwise, teacher burnout is associated with (de)motivation and low job satisfaction among teachers (Aelterman et al., 2019). These teachers provide less support and become less engaging in their task of helping students. Furthermore, Moè and Katz (2020) identified that burnout leads teachers to adopt a (de)motivating teaching style resulting in disengaged students and reduced student outcomes.

Further, Taxer and Frenzel (2018) argue that while enthusiastic teachers help improve students' achievement and motivation, enjoying teaching positively affects teachers occupational well-being. Similarly, Moè (2016) discusses that teacher's displayed enthusiasm results in many positive student outcomes such as intrinsic motivation and vitality, enjoyment and self-efficacy and achievement, among others. Furthermore, Burić (2019) supports that teacher emotion specifically expressed positive emotions contribute to improved students outcomes such as students' motivation. Besides faking their emotions and expressing enthusiasm benefits students in terms of improving their positive affect and intrinsic motivation while it negatively affects teachers' occupational well-being. However, such behaviors as hiding emotions (faking emotions) and lack of enjoyment in teaching lead teachers to experience burnout.

In Ethiopia, there has been the practice of systematic research to assess the level of burnout among teachers of secondary schools and university academics. However, such studies have not focused on the problems of burnout among primary school teachers.

Moreover, the studies conducted have not addressed burnout problems in the eastern part of the country.

## Conceptual framework

The success of schools and that of students is dependent upon the sustained effort and commitment of its teachers. Teachers of diverse backgrounds have different value orientations, which leads to different needs and expectations of the individual. On the other hand, organizations have goals, values, climate, and resources they can provide, which should align with employees' goals, values, climate, and resource needs for sustained employee engagement.

On the other hand, organizations differ from each other in their internal values, goals, climate, and job demands. This makes them suitable for individual employees of a particular characteristic. This makes them favorably situated for some employees to work and succeed and unfavorable for others to succeed. If there is a fit between the particular employee and an organization, there will be a successful accomplishment of goals as well as increased job satisfaction for employees. On the other hand, when there is a lack of person-job fit, engaged and motivated employees could gradually lose their motivation for the job and experience burnout.

Job seekers have often made job choices based upon the degree to which they fit the task requirements of the job. Job seekers choose companies to work for based on how well their personality fits with the company's culture. Similarly, Teachers' values should be in congruence with the values of schools and the education system as a whole. Besides, the goal the school pursues should be in alignment with the goal of teachers, the personality of individuals teachers should be in congruence with the climate of schools. The needs of that of materials or other resources should be congruent to the supplies the school can provide. Misfit between these results in teacher burnout (Tong et al., 2015).

Organizations and employees have specific characteristics important for maintaining harmony and productivity. When organizational characteristics are in congruence with the individual characteristics person-job fit occurs resulting in productivity and employee job satisfaction. However, when there is a misfit between the person and the organization, employees experience burnout and gradually leave the organization (Maslach et al., 2001; Deniza et al., 2015; de Mol et al., 2018).

Moreover, the ability of teachers to successfully direct teaching and classroom management is influenced by their psychological well-being and socio-emotional functioning (Madigan and Kim, 2021). Burnt out teacher will therefore have an impact on student outcomes including motivation and performance (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009; Herman et al., 2017). More specifically, burnt out teachers are more likely to have hostile interactions with their students, feel irritated when students do not listen to instructions, and have poor opinions of their pupils (Grayson and Alvarez, 2008). Lesson preparation will be done with less engagement and

effort on the part of the teacher, and they will act less positively toward students as a result of burnout, lowering the quality of education the school offers (Maslach and Leiter, 1999). Burnout may also result in other pertinent disengagement behaviors, such as complete absences from the classroom (Taris, 2006; Ingersoll and May, 2012). Besides, burnout is contagious as students in the classrooms of burnt out teachers will themselves experience stress which will lead to reduced achievement and depression (Madigan and Kim, 2021; Tikkanen et al., 2021). Additionally, burnout makes teachers less supportive of their pupils, which lowers the students' intrinsic drive and engagement (Maslach and Leiter, 1999). These elements will probably affect the experiences and results of the students.

Research conducted to identify the predictors of burnout among teachers has recognized demographic variables as predictors of burnout. Accordingly, Lau et al. (2005) report that year of service, gender and age among others predict burnout syndrome among teachers. Similarly, indicated that demographic variables such as such as age, teaching experience, educational background, predict the experience of burnout among teachers. Researchers (Marinković et al., 2019; Kyrian et al., 2020) have identified that male and older teachers experience high level of burnout syndrome on their job. While Shaheen and Mahmood (2020) agree that gender and age of teachers predicts the experience of burnout syndrome, they claim that the burnout syndrome is prevalent among young male teachers. On the other hand, Răducu and Stănculescu, 2022 acknowledge year of service as the predictor of burnout. Though researchers agree the association between demographics variables and the experience of burnout, they fail to agree that which demographics variables predict burnout. Some researchers (Purvanova and Muros, 2010; Kyrian et al., 2020) identify gender while others (Maslach et al., 2001) identify age and Ozoemena et al. (2021) age and educational qualification as predictors of burnout. Thus, to date the influence of demographic variable on burnout has been ambiguous.

Thus, burnout among teachers in primary schools of the Dire Dawa administrative region must be studied. Specifically, this study addressed the following key questions:

- How widespread is the problem of professional burnout among public school teachers?
  - What are the professional characteristics of teachers who suffer from burnout?
  - There is significant relationship between teachers demographic characteristics and burnout experience of teachers in public primary schools in Dire Dawa Administration.
- a. There is significant relationship between old age and burnout experience of primary school teachers.
  - b. There is significant relationship between maleness and burnout experience of primary school teachers in Dire Dawa town.

- c. There is significant relationship between many years of service and burnout experience of primary school teachers in Dire Dawa town.
- d. There is significant relationship between educational experience and burnout experience of primary school teachers in Dire Dawa town.

## Materials and methods

### Research design

The major purpose of this study is to empirically determine the level of burnout and associated factors experienced by public primary school teachers. The study aimed at collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the level of stress and burnout among primary school teachers in the administrative region. To this end, it used a cross-sectional survey design (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Data was collected using a questionnaire developed for this particular purpose by Seidman and Zager (1987) to identify the level of burnout among public primary school teachers as well as investigate the effect socio-demographic factors may have on the burnout experience of teachers.

### Sampling design

The study used both random and non-random sampling techniques to select participants for the study. Purposive sampling and Stratified random sampling techniques were used to select schools while a simple random sampling method was used to select teachers. Urban public schools were selected purposively for this study while these urban schools were stratified in each precinct and schools were selected based on the proportion of schools in each precinct. Thus, out of the 70 government-owned primary and secondary schools in the region 16 schools or 23% of them all from the urban schools and at least one school from each of the nine urban precincts were selected. According to Gill et al. (2010) for a study of two variables, they advise selecting a sample size of 100 or more. From these schools, 211 teachers were selected using a simple random sampling method.

### Data collection instruments

#### Socio-demographic variables

In addition to the teacher burnout scale items, teachers' socio-demographic characteristics were collected during data collection. The demographic characteristics collected were teachers' educational qualification, teachers' gender, teachers' age, and teachers' length of work of experience using the length of year of professional service teachers have. These characteristics were regressed over the four subscales of teacher burnout inventory to see if they significantly affect teachers' work-related burnout experience.

To assess the burnout experience among public primary school teachers the teacher burnout scale developed by Seidman and Zager (1987) was used. The teacher burnout scale is a better instrument in measuring teacher burnout because the concepts it is built on are consistent with the concept of burnout. Seidman and Zager (1987) developed a 21 item teacher burnout scale to measure the burnout experience of public school teachers which was tested twice with 390 and 490 teachers on two occasions. On a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, the teacher burnout questionnaire asks teachers about their perspectives on teaching. Some examples of the items on the teacher burnout scale are as follows: "I believe that my efforts in the classroom are unappreciated by the administrators" and "I find it difficult to calm down after a day of teaching." Burnout scores for each subsection ranged from 6 to 36, A higher score indicates severe burnout feelings (Seidman and Zager, 1987). The factor analysis resulted in four subscales, namely career satisfaction, perceived administrative support, coping with job-related stress, and attitude toward students. It has been used by different researchers and is better suited to measure the burnout experience of teachers than other instruments. The teacher burnout scale has good internal consistency with the Cronbach alpha coefficient for all four subscales being greater than 0.7. More specifically, the alpha coefficient for career satisfaction was 0.89, for administrative support, 0.84, for coping with job-related stress 0.80, and for attitude toward students, the coefficient of Cronbach alpha was 0.72 indicating acceptable internal consistency (Schaufeli et al., 1996; Moreno-Jiménez et al., 1997).

### Data analysis method

The quantitative data collected were summarized using descriptive statistics and the mean of the four subscales was used to identify the level of burnout experienced among public primary school teachers in the Dire Dawa administrative region. The relationship between the demographic variables and burnout experience was analyzed using Spearman rho correlation and logistic regression. To this end, data were collected from study 211 participants/teachers in the urban public primary schools using the teacher burnout scale. From the 211 questionnaires distributed 168 questionnaires were completed and returned which amounts to 81% of the distributed questionnaire. Thus, the analysis was carried out with the data collected with the 168 questionnaires filled and returned. The collected data was deemed sufficient for the analysis; answering the basic questions and reaching after the study.

## Results and discussion

Among the 211 primary school teachers contacted to collect data, 168 of them completed and returned the questionnaire. Of the 168 respondents, 84 (50%) were males 81 (48%) were females



and 3 did not identify their sex. Whereas 72 of the respondents were diploma graduates, 93 of the respondents were first-degree graduates, while the rest 2 were Master's degree graduates and the other 1 respondent was a certificate graduate. Among the respondents 4 of them were between the ages 20–25 while 26 of them were between the age range of 26–30, 47 of them were between the age range 31–35, 42 were between the age range of 36–40, 36 of them were between the age range of 41–50 while the rest 13 of them had an age of more than 50 years.

The analysis of the collected data revealed that career satisfaction among primary school teachers is very low with a mean of 2.65 and a score of 18 while coping with job stress showed a relatively low mean with 2.64 and a score of 15.8 for coping with job stress. Besides, perceived administrative support and attitude toward students have a mean of 2.64 a score of 16.7, and 2.75, and a score of 11, respectively, indicating low means for all the four subscales of teacher burnout inventory.

The above Table 1 indicates that the subscales of the teacher burnout scale show low means except for career satisfaction which shows a slightly above the average mean of around 3.7. This indicates that primary school teachers in the administrative region experience burnout exercised in three of the scales of teachers' burnout scales.

## Correlation analysis

To see if there is a relationship between the teacher burnout scales and teachers' demographic characteristics a Spearman

TABLE 1 Mean and standard deviation of the subscales of teacher burnout scale.

Subscales	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Career satisfaction	168	3.65	0.997
Perceived administrative support		2.64	0.846
Coping with job-related stress		2.77	0.681
Attitude toward students		2.75	0.656

TABLE 2 Correlation between demographic characteristics and burnout scales.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Teachers gender	–							
Teacher age	0.080	–						
Teacher job experience	0.142	0.753**	–					
Teachers educational qualification	–0.216**	0.146	0.190*	–				
Career	0.217**	0.061	0.095	–0.015	–			
Cope	–0.190*	–0.040	–0.043	0.016	–0.268**	1.000		
Perceived	0.082	–0.179*	–0.130	–0.103	0.063	0.460**	1.000	
Attitude	–0.081	–0.099	–0.032	–0.025	0.197*	0.268**	0.359**	1.000

Significant at  $p < 0.05^*$ , and  $0.01^{**}$  (two tailed).

correlation analysis was conducted. The result of the correlation analysis revealed mixed results about the relationship between the subscales of the teacher burnout scale and the demographic variables which are shown in the table hereunder. The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents were correlated with the four subscales of the teacher burnout inventory, the results revealed that teachers' gender is positively correlated with career satisfaction and negatively correlated with coping with job stress at  $p > 0.05$  level of significance. On the other hand, teachers' age is negatively correlated with perceived administrative support while job experience shows no correlation with all of the four subscales. However, teachers' experience with the existing school leader showed a small but negative correlation with attitude toward the student.

As the above Table 2 reveals the correlation coefficient between teachers' gender and career satisfaction is significant at alpha 0.05 with a correlation coefficient of 0.217. The correlation is positive but low, indicating that career satisfaction and being female have a significant relationship. In addition, teachers' gender has a low and negative relationship with coping with job-related stress with a correlation coefficient of  $-0.190$ . The relationship is significant but negative indicating that the two have an inverse relationship. This indicates that female primary school teachers have a lower tendency to cope with job-related stress and thereby experience burnout. On the other hand teachers' age has a significant but negative relationship with perceived administrative support with a correlation coefficient of  $-0.179$ . Though the relationship is significant it indicates that as teachers get older and gather more experience their confidence in the administration of the school to provide them with the necessary job-related support falls. All the correlation coefficients are significant at the alpha 0.05 level of significance.

## Regression analysis

The results of the analysis in Table 3 indicate that out of the nine covariates only four covariates are significantly associated with career satisfaction of primary school teachers, in which teachers' work experiences of 11–25 years exhibited negative regression coefficients, indicating that they are negatively associated with career satisfaction of primary school teachers. This

TABLE 3 Estimates of determinants of teachers' career satisfaction.

Variables	Estimates
Teacher age	0.300
Teachers' gender (Female)	0.803**
Teachers' gender (Male)	0.769
Teachers' educational qualification	0.140
Teachers' work experience <5 years	-1.549
Teachers' work experience 6–10 years	-0.698
Teachers' work experience 11–15 years	-1.142**
Teachers' work experience 16–20 years	-1.212**
Teachers' work experience 21–25 years	-1.311**
Teachers' work experience >25 years	Reference

\*\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

means that they are likely to decrease the higher order of scores for the career satisfaction of teachers. When primary school teachers become more experienced they are likely to be more dissatisfied with their profession. Those with experiences of 11–15 years are 1.142 times more likely to be dissatisfied with their profession than others with lower years of job experience. However, teachers' gender (Female) is positively associated with the career satisfaction of teachers. Being a female primary school teacher exhibited a positive regression coefficient indicating that being female is likely to increase career satisfaction with the higher-order score of career satisfaction.

The regression of the scores of demographic characteristics over career satisfaction indicates a model fit significance of 0.46 and insignificant goodness of fit Pearson significance of 0.684 and deviance significance score of 1.000 indicating that the model is fit for the data collected. Moreover, it shows a Pseudo-R score of 0.108. This indicates that a 10.8% change in career satisfaction of primary school teachers is explained by being a female teacher and having more experience as a teacher in public primary schools.

### Estimates of determinants of teachers' perceived administrative support

The regression analysis between perceived administrative support and teachers' age shows that out of the 10 covariates only two covariates are significantly associated with the perceived administrative support of primary school teachers, in which teachers aged 26–35 years exhibited positive regression coefficients, indicating that they are positively associated with the perceived administrative support of primary school teachers. This means that they are likely to increase the higher order of scores for perceived administrative support of public primary school teachers. When primary school teachers become more aged they are likely to recognize the support the school administration renders for their job effectiveness and success with their profession. Thus, teachers who are aged and are between the ages of 26–30 and 31–35 years of age are 1.627 and 1.563 times more

TABLE 4 Estimates of determinants of teachers' attitude toward their students.

Variables	Estimates
Teachers' age 20–25 years	1.357
Teachers' age 26–30 years	2.235**
Teachers' age 31–35 years	1.514**
Teachers' age 36–40 years	1.253
Teachers' age 41–50 years	1.018
Teachers' age > 50 years	Reference
Teachers' work experience <5 years	-0.927
Teachers' work experience 6–10 years	-0.858
Teachers' work experience 11–15 years	-1.455**
Teachers' work experience 16–20 years	-1.738**
Teachers' work experience 21–25 years	-1.159
Teachers' work experience >25 years	Reference
Teachers' gender	-0.448
Teachers' education	-0.006

\*\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

likely to positively perceive the support the school administration renders for the success of their profession than others with a lower or higher ages.

The regression of the scores of demographic characteristics over perceived administrative support indicates a model fit significance of 0.012 and insignificant goodness of fit Pearson significance of 0.099 and deviance significance score of 1.000 indicating that the model is fit for the data collected. Moreover, it shows a Pseudo-R score of 0.100. This indicates that a 10% change in perceived administrative support of primary school teachers is explained by being a teachers' age.

The analysis of the data in Table 4 shows those out of the fourteen covariates only five covariates are significantly associated with attitude toward students of primary school teachers, in which teachers' age of 26–35 years exhibited positive regression coefficients, indicating that they are positively associated with attitude toward students of primary school teachers. This means that they are likely to increase the higher order of scores for attitude toward students of primary school teachers. When primary school teachers become more experienced and develop into adulthood they are likely to be more positive toward their students. Likewise, teachers within the age range of 26–30 and 31–35 years are 2.235 and 1.514 times more likely to have a positive attitude toward their students than teachers who are older than them. On the other hand, those with work experiences of 11–15 years and those with job experience of 16–20 years are negatively associated with attitude toward their students. These teachers harbor 1.455 and 1.738 times more negative attitudes toward their students than their younger counterparts. Teachers with job experience of 11–15 years and with job experience of 16–20 years are negatively associated with attitude toward their students. These teachers due to their long-term interaction with their students gradually develop a negative attitude toward their students.

The regression of the scores of demographic characteristics over attitude toward students indicates a model fit significance of 0.015 and insignificant goodness of fit Pearson significance of 0.908 and deviance significance score of 1.000 indicating that the model is fit for the data collected. Moreover, it shows a Pseudo-R score of 0.097. This indicates that a 9.7% change in attitude toward students of a primary school teacher is explained by being a teachers' age and having more experience as a teacher in public primary schools.

## Discussion

Teachers' burnout is the result of several factors including socio-demographic variables of respondents. This study tried to investigate the level of burnout public primary school teachers in the Dire Dawa administrative region experience and identify how much socio-demographic variables of respondents make teachers susceptible to the burnout experience. To this end, data collected using descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysis revealed that primary school teachers in public primary schools experience burnout. Among the demographic factors age, gender, and job experience were found to be significant predictors of burnout experience of public primary school teachers in the administration.

The findings suggest that demographic variables such as age (old age), gender (being male) and many years of experience predict burnout syndrome among primary school teachers in Dire Dawa Administration. The findings are consistent with previous studies (Lau et al., 2005; Al-Asadi et al., 2018; Shaheen and Mahmood, 2018). Burnout is prevalent among male primary school teachers who have at least 11 years of work experience.

As teachers have many years of service in primary schools, they tend to develop negative attitude toward their students and the school administration. Previous studies (Grayson and Alvarez, 2008) have also reported that teachers who experience burnout have negative attitude toward their students and have adversarial relation with their students.

The findings of this study also suggest that as primary school teachers have more and more years of working with their students they become more dissatisfied in their profession. This is consistent with previous similar studies (Maslach and Leiter, 1999; Richards et al., 2019).

Similarly, Shaheen and Mahmood (2018) discovered that demographic variables such as gender, age, and job experience of respondents show significant association with burnout. Besides, Al-Asadi et al. (2018) found that age, sex, and marital status as significant predictors of burnout among teachers. Moreover, Lau et al. (2005) found that teachers' gender, job experience, educational qualification, and teachers' age as significant predictors of burnout experience among teachers. While in an earlier study Shaheen and Mahmood (2016) confirmed that gender and educational qualification have a

significant influence on burnout while age showed a non-significant relationship with burnout. On the other hand, Subon and Sigie (2016) identified job experience or length of service as a significant predictor of burnout. Also, Fisher (2011) identified job experience to be a significant predictor of burnout among secondary school teachers. In addition, Sood (2019) found that male teachers are more prone to burnout experience (depersonalization) than female teachers. Likewise, other researchers have also identified at least one of the demographic variables to significantly relate to teachers' burnout. To this end, Kasalak and Dağyar (2022) found that gender & seniority (job experience) as significant predictors of teacher burnout measured using MBI. While Iqbal et al. (2020) found that teachers' burnout experience is significantly affected by gender. Also, Ptáček et al. (2019) report that both male and female teachers experience burnout though the type of burnout differs.

## Conclusion

This study showed that there is a high level of burnout among primary school teachers of the Dire Dawa Administrative region. The most important factors that contributed to higher levels of burnout among public primary school teachers as found by the ordinal logistic regression model were: teachers' job experience, teachers' age, and teachers' gender were associated with burnout. As a result, it is suggested that one way to address the problem of burnout among primary school teachers is to allow them to participate in school decision-making and to build positive relationships with pupils to alleviate the factors associated with stress and professional burnout. It is also important to note that such studies should be carried out at a wider and larger scale to understand the effect burnout has on students' achievement and associated factors in the region.

## Limitation of the study

The study's limitations include its cross-sectional character, which limits causality conclusions, and its reliance on self-reporting, which might lead to over-or under-reporting. Moreover, it has dealt with instructors' perspectives rather than facts that may change with time.

The limitation is primarily methodological in nature. The study examined the phenomena of burnout among primary school teachers using self-report questionnaires, quantitative methodologies, correlation, and regression analysis. Self-report bias may have been lessened by looking at more objective indicators of work quantity and quality, such as class size, teaching load, school culture, leadership style, and worker satisfaction. Additionally, qualitative or mixed method approaches may have offered a better grasp of the methods and processes behind the development of burnout, the many variables that contribute to

feeling burnout, and the ways in which burnout results in unfavorable consequences.

The study used Seidman and Zager's (1987) teachers burnout scale which uses a four sub categories of burnout instead of others' such as Maslach & co's burnout scale which use a three sub categories of burnout used repeatedly by other researchers. This has made it comparing the specific results a bit problematic. Third, the study did not include the possibility of confounding effects of personality traits and contextual factors as well as seasonal job demands in the relationship between socio-demographic factors and burnout which may have produced a different result.

## Research and practical implications of the study

This study tied to identify primary school teachers' burnout experience and whether such experience could be predicted by socio-demographic factors. The study is mainly quantitative in its approach and used cross-sectional study design. However, it does not claim to have identified everything there is to know about the burnout experience of primary school teachers in the administrative region. Thus, future studies should focus on whether burnout is seasonal or not depending on teachers job demands, whether marital status is a predictor of burnout or not using qualitative or mixed method approaches that offer a better grasp of the methods and processes behind the development of burnout, the many variables that contribute to feeling burnout, and the ways in which burnout results in unfavorable consequences. Further, education official in the region can use the results of the study to train future and incumbent teachers

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on how to handle their relationship with students, reduce their expectation of the school leadership and stay more vigilant on their jobs.

## Data availability statement

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

## Author contributions

DM prepared the proposal, collected the data, conducted the analysis, and wrote the report.

## Conflict of interest

The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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